

Parcel Cooking

Sea Bass en Papillote with Courgettes, Apricot Flan with a Glazed Topping

Apricot Flan with a Glazed Topping

Ingredients

(Pastry)

- 170 gm Butter
- 4 tbsp. Icing sugar
- 250 gm Plain flour
- 2 egg yolks
- Cling film

(Topping)

- Tin of apricots in fruit juice or light syrup
- ½ tbsp. custard powder
- ½ tbsp. sugar
- 120 ml. milk
- 1½ tsp. arrowroot
- 10 inch flan tin (loose bottomed)

Method

1. Rub the butter into the flour to make fine crumbs. Mix in the icing sugar. Alternatively do this in a food processor.
2. Beat the egg yolks and mix into the crumb mixture (or use the food processor) to form a soft pliable dough.
3. Wrap in cling film and leave to rest in the fridge for about 15 to 20 minutes
4. Roll out the pastry to line a 10 inch loose-based flan tin, neatening the top edge of the pastry.
5. Preheat the oven to 170°C / Gas 4.
6. Prick the pastry with a fork and then line the pastry with grease proof paper and baking beans and bake blind for 10 minutes. This prevents the pastry from rising too much. Remove the paper and beans, cook for a further 5 minutes. Take out from the oven. Leave to cool in the tin.
7. Mix the custard powder with the sugar and 2 tbsp. of the milk in a small bowl. Heat the rest of the milk in a small pan. Take the milk off the heat and stir into the custard mixture. Wash the milk pan out. Return the custard mixture to the pan, bring slowly to the boil, stirring all the time until it thickens. Spread this onto the cooled pastry base. Leave to cool for a few minutes.
8. Drain the juice from the apricots into a pan. Reserve a tbsp. of the juice in a small bowl and mix with the arrowroot. Put the apricots onto the flan. Now stir the arrowroot mixture into the pan and bring slowly to the boil until it thickens. Pour and spread over the apricots.

Sea Bass en Papillote with Courgettes and French Buttered Potatoes

(En papillote means making a foil parcel to steam in the oven)

Ingredients (to serve 4)

- 5 knobs of butter
- 4 sea bass fillets (with skin on)^a
- 4 sprigs of thyme
- 4 tbsp. white wine
- 3 large courgettes, cut very thinly sliced
- 2 tsp. chopped thyme leaves
- Juice of half a lemon
- Freshly grated nutmeg
- Salt and black pepper
- Double sided foil with a baking paper backing^b

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180° C (fan), gas mark 6. Place four squares of foil large enough to wrap a fish fillet on the work surface. Place a knob of butter in the middle of each square with a fillet on top – skin side down and season well with salt and pepper. Add 1 sprig of thyme to each fillet, followed by a tbsp. of wine. Fold over the foil to make a parcel sealing the edges tightly. Place on a baking sheet and bake in the oven for 10-12 minutes. The parcels may puff up slightly during cooking.
2. Melt the remaining knob of butter in a frying pan. Add the courgettes and quickly stir fry for two minutes or until just wilted, still with a little bite. Add the thyme leaves, lemon juice and grated nutmeg to taste. Season well and divide between four plates.
3. Open the parcels. Put the sea bass on top of the courgettes – skin side up. Peel off and discard the skin. Pour over any remaining juices.

^a You can use other white fish instead of sea bass

^b If not available you can use a square of foil and a square of baking parchment/grease proof paper together instead.